

SENATE BILL 2362

By Watson

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 33; Title 63 and Title 68, relative to a continuing education program for healthcare professionals focused on public and office safety.

WHEREAS, the General Assembly finds and declares that public safety is of paramount importance, and healthcare professionals play a vital role in protecting the public from violence; and

WHEREAS, healthcare professionals must be equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to identify potential risks to public safety; and

WHEREAS, a continuing education program for healthcare professionals that focuses on public safety, office safety, identification of individuals at risk of violence or mass violence, emergency and non-emergency involuntary admission to an inpatient treatment facility, and applicable HIPAA compliance would improve the safety of patients and the public; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 63, Chapter 1, Part 1, is amended by adding the following as a new section:

(a) As used in this section:

(1) "Board" means the board of medical examiners created pursuant to chapter 6 of this title;

(2) "Continuing education" means the healthcare professional's licensing board required continued postgraduate education intended to provide healthcare professionals

with knowledge of new developments or reinforcement of previously learned information in the healthcare professional's field;

(3) "Department" means the department of health; and

(4) "Healthcare professional" means a person licensed to practice a healing art in this state pursuant to this title.

(b) The department shall collaborate with a Tennessee organization approved by the board that is accredited as a sponsor of continuing medical education to create a continuing education program for the purpose of providing healthcare professionals with information or training relative to public safety that includes, but is not limited to:

(1) Identifying and reporting individuals who may need emergent or non-emergent treatment related to their mental health;

(2) The emergency and non-emergency involuntary admission process, including the duty or authority established under title 33 to involuntarily detain, evaluate, or admit an individual to an inpatient treatment facility;

(3) Safety in healthcare settings, including how to protect staff and patients from threats, including threats of mass violence and an active shooter; and

(4) Maintaining HIPAA compliance while completing any necessary communication, writing, or reporting during the emergency and non-emergency involuntary admission process.

(c) The program must be approved by the board prior to implementation.

(d) The program must be accessible to all healthcare professionals online.

(e) The program must be a minimum of two (2) hours of continuing education credit, and the healthcare professional licensing boards under this title shall count the program toward the boards' continuing education requirements.

(f) The department shall implement the program described by this section within six (6) months of the effective date of this act.

(g) The department, upon approval by the board, may periodically update any curriculum developed pursuant to this section to account for new research and information.

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.